

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY & EMPLOYEE HUMAN RIGHTS INFORMATION FOR ALL DDS STAFF

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYMENT

In accordance with the state law (Section 46a-68 of the Connecticut General Statutes), the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), is required to develop and implement an affirmative action plan. By definition, '*affirmative action*' is positive action, undertaken with conviction and effort, to overcome the present effects of past employment practices, policies and barriers to equal employment opportunity, and to achieve the full and fair participation of Women, Blacks, Hispanics and other groups that have been found to be historically underutilized in the DDS workforce or affected by employment policies or practices having adverse impact.

Affirmative action applies to all aspects of the employment process including recruitment, applicant screening, interviewing and selection criteria, hiring decisions, promotional processes, training/career development, interaction between coworkers, benefits, compensation, disciplinary measures, layoff and termination. The implementation of the DDS Affirmative Action Plan has, as its' primary goal, the elimination of underutilization and elimination of discrimination against protected class persons in all aspects of employment.

In keeping with the agency's commitment to Affirmative Action, all DDS employees are entitled to work in settings that are free of unlawful discriminatory treatment including intimidation and harassment. Discriminatory treatment is prohibited, whether involving supervisors and their subordinate staff or interaction between peers. Further, the DDS acknowledges its' responsibility, in accordance with state law (Section 46a-71 of the Connecticut General Statutes), to affirmatively provide services and programs in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. The DDS greatly enhances its' ability to provide fair and non-discriminatory services to the State's diverse population when the composition of the DDS workforce is similarly diverse.

Reference Policy:

http://www.ct.gov/dds/lib/dds/adminmanual/iif/iifpo001_dds_affirmative_action_policy_statement.pdf

AN INVITATION TO ALL DDS STAFF

All DDS staff are invited to review and comment on the DDS Affirmative Action Plan. Questions and comments may be directed to any of the Equal Employment Opportunity personnel listed on the last page in this notice. Employee comments are collected and included in the DDS Affirmative Action Plan that is prepared each year (submitted annually on December 30th). Each Affirmative Action Plan contains the comments submitted during the one year period from September 1st to August 31st preceding each December 30th filing date.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Equal Employment Opportunity Office personnel (as listed in this notice) are responsible for the development and coordination of Affirmative Action Plan and Programs in the three Regions (North, South, West, & Central Office). Equal Employment Opportunity Office personnel are also responsible for investigating employee allegations of discriminatory treatment. The Equal Employment Opportunity personnel also provide training to agency employees regarding Equal Employment Opportunity Office policies and procedures.

Implementation of the DDS Affirmative Action Plan is the responsibility of all DDS managers and supervisors. Commissioner Murray is ultimately responsible for the success or failure of the Affirmative Action Plan.

The Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), is the agency charged with enforcement of the state's anti-discrimination laws and implementation of affirmative action programs. The CHRO annually reviews and analyzes the content of the DDS Affirmative Action Plan and determines if it is approved or disapproved.

EMPLOYEE HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION

It is unlawful to harass or intimidate an employee or to otherwise discriminate against an employee on the basis of his or her:

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| ➤ race or color, | ➤ national origin, | ➤ ancestry, |
| ➤ sex (gender), | ➤ religious creed, | ➤ age, |
| ➤ intellectual disability, | ➤ learning disability, | ➤ marital status, |
| present or past history of | ➤ physical disability | ➤ sexual orientation, |
| mental disability, | (including individuals | ➤ transgender, |
| ➤ having opposed or | with blindness or | ➤ genetic information, |
| complained of such | recovering from | ➤ gender identity or expression, |
| conduct believed to be | alcoholism or | ➤ prior conviction of a crime. |
| discriminatory i.e., | substance abuse). | |
| retaliation. | | |

SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROHIBITION

Sexual harassment is a form of gender-based discrimination that is prohibited by Federal and State Law (Section 46a-60 of the Conn. General Statutes). Additionally, Commissioner Murray has issued a Policy Statement warning that sexual harassment, in the workplace, will not be tolerated.

The legal definition of sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual conduct when such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Reference Policy, II.F.PO.002 Sexual Harassment Prevention:

<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2038&q=328430&ddssiPNavCtr=#49015>

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT - ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) imposes broad, far-reaching mandates on employers and entities serving the public. Particular emphasis is placed on non-discrimination in employment and access to places of public accommodation including physical accessibility to opportunities and services. The employee seeking assistance in completing a request for reasonable accommodation will need to contact the DDS Americans with Disabilities (504) Coordinator Teresa Gonzalez, Assistant Human Resource Administrator, 460 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106.

Reference:

http://www.ct.gov/dds/lib/dds/human_resources/dds_ada_reasonable_accommodation_process_memo_to_employees.pdf

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION

Currently the Department contracts with Language-line Services to provide over the phone interpretation for our consumers and their families to bridge the communication gap. In over-the-phone interpretation, Language Line Services' interpreters listen to limited and non-English speaking customers, analyze the message, and accurately convey its original meaning to staff and vice versa. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year with over 170 languages and dialects. As indicated in the DDS Manual, Language Line Services are available to case managers, support brokers, service coordinators, program supervisors, case management supervisors and all other staff responsible for ensuring communication with families and individuals served by DDS. Questions regarding this service should be directed to Social Services Medical Administrator Siobhan Morgan at 860-418-8723.

Reference: <http://dds.si.ct.gov/ddssi/cwp/view.asp?a=3254&q=419418&ddssiNav=1>

AN EMPLOYEE'S RIGHT TO FILE A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT

Any DDS employee who feels that he or she has been discriminated against, or has otherwise been deprived of his or her human rights protections (Noted above under Employee Human Rights Protection), may file an internal complaint through the DDS's Equal Employment Opportunity Office by contacting personnel listed below or by fax:

- Carl Jordan, Central Office, Hartford @ (860)418-6144, e-mail carl.jordan@ct.gov
- Renee LaBarge, Central Office, Hartford @ (860)418-6022, e-mail renee.labarge@ct.gov
- Jennifer Taplin, Central Office, Hartford @ (860)418-6143, e-mail jennifer.taplin@ct.gov

Additionally, faxes may be sent to the Equal Employment Opportunity staff at 860-706-5855.

- **DDS employees who wish to file an internal complaint shall be submitted within 60 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory act.**
- **All discrimination complaints are treated as “confidential” except where disclosure is required.**
- **No employee shall be subjected to retaliation for exercising his or her rights under this procedure.**

Reference Procedure, II.F.PR.004 Internal Discrimination Complaint:

<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2038&q=328430&ddssiPNavCtr=#49015>

Employees may exercise their option to file a discrimination complaint with the following external agencies below:

- **The Commission On Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO)**
Phone: 1-800 477-5737 <http://www.ct.gov/chro/cwp/view.asp?a=2523&Q=315790>
TDD (860) 541-3459
- **The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC]**
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
Phone: 1-800-669-4000 Fax: (617) 565-3196
TTY: 1-800-669-6820 <http://eeoc.gov/employees/charge.cfm>
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Government Center
J. F. Kennedy Federal Building - Room 1875
Boston, MA 02203
Customer Response Center: (800) 368-1019 Fax: (202) 619-3818
TDD: (800) 537-7697
Email: ocrmail@hhs.gov <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/filing-with-ocr/>

ALTERNATIVE FILINGS:

Connecticut Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106, Telephone: (860) 240-8300
<http://ctpcsw.com>

Connecticut Department of Labor, Regulation of Wages Division,

200 Folly Brook Boulevard, Wethersfield, CT 06109 – Main Telephone: (860) 263-6000 or refer to DOL website for Wage and Workplace Standards Division numbers
<http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/wage-hour/pay002.htm>

United States Labor Department, Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Division

135 High Street, Hartford, CT 06103 - Tel: (860) 240-4160
<http://www.dol.gov/whd/>